There is no waiting list for new domestic LPG connections in the State of Himachal Pradesh as on 1.11.2007.

(c) and (d) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country, including the State of Himachal Pradesh and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors.

Opening of branches of Indian Banks in USA

†*69. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USA is not giving permission to Indian Banks for opening branches in their country;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to tackle this situation; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Out of the applications of three Indian Banks for a branch licence in the United States of America (USA), the Federal Reserve Board of the USA has recently approved the proposal of ICICI Bank to upgrade its Representative Office into a Bank Branch. The other two proposals of State Bank of India (SBI) and Bank of Baroda (BoB) for opening additional branches in USA have not yet been approved.

(b) and (c) The delay in SBI and BoB obtaining a licence for their additional branches in USA has been taken up by the Government and the Reserve Bank of India with their counterparts in the USA.

Fund managers for the New Pension Scheme

*70. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have selected the fund managers for the New Pension Scheme, and if so, the details thereof and the criteria for the selection of such fund managers;

(b) whether it is a fact that the selected fund managers do not have the requisite data of the corpus collected since January, 2004;

(c) what steps are being taken to facilitate expeditious collation of pension data by the fund managers; and

(d) what is the estimated return accrued since January, 2004 when the corpus was not being managed by any fund manager?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Three sponsors of pension funds *viz.* State Bank of India, Life Insurance Corporation of India and UTI Asset Management Company have been selected by PFRDA (Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority), through a process of competitive bidding, to manage the pension corpus of Government employees under the New Pension System (NPS). The selection was based on the criteria

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.